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APPLIED ART IN THE FRANCIS W. PARKER SCHOOL

In carrying on the hand-work in the Francis W. Parker School the ideal held is that of allowing the pupil freedom of choice in those articles which he makes for his home or for himself, instead of requiring him to make a prearranged set of models. His only limitations in his work are those fixed by his individual power and skill, as estimated by the teacher. To follow such a plan successfully, it is essential to have for suggestion a large number of examples of work involving the various typical processes of the crafts.

The somewhat fragmentary articles which follow are presented with the idea of making a few suggestions for hand-work which this school has found practicable in the various grades indicated.

Because work of this nature is comparatively untried in the elementary schools, it is thought that such detailed descriptions as are here given may prove valuable to other schools making similar experiments.

APPLIED DESIGN

KATHERINE CLEMENTS

The various crafts in the school—wood-work, copper, clay-modeling, textiles, and bookbinding—present a constant demand or motive for the study of design. The children work eagerly, applying original designs to the material as soon as they are able to produce anything worthy. This work develops to the utmost the child's creative ability and imagination, in terms of shapes, and cultivates the taste and skill in choice and arrangement of these shapes in beautiful relations. The children used *given* units first, the problem being to arrange these units in a beautiful design, in a given space; for example, a square, suitable for a tile. The units were: See Fig. 1.

The children used these to make original designs under the following regulations: Each form must be used at least once; the size of units may be changed, but not the shapes; each unit may be repeated as many times as desirable.

It was exceedingly difficult for some of the children to think in terms of forms of this kind, and most of them had to make several designs before they could produce anything satisfactory.

Figs. 1-5 show some of the results of this work.

Then more difficult groups of units were given, some of the results being shown in Figs. 6 and 7. These were used with much more ease, and some interesting designs were made. One student used a design made from these units to decorate a desk set (see Fig. 8). The set consisted of ink-well, stamp-box, and pen-tray, and each was ornamented with a design. (See full illustration and description of desk set under "Clay-Modeling.")

After the children had worked sufficiently with given units to enable them to think in terms of this kind, they were given vegetables, fruits, and flowers, which they cut into sections, and from these they found units for themselves. The vegetables, fruits, and flowers used most satisfactory were the tomato, carrot, lemon, apple, trillium, and wild carrot blossom. (See Figs. 9 and 10.)

A design (see Fig. 11) made by a boy in the tenth grade from tomato units was applied to a decoration or design for a handle for a table drawer, which he was making in the shop.

Having the knowledge of many shapes and the ability to see shapes in everyday, familiar things, the children can now work with simple curved and straight lines, arranging them in a given or chosen space; e. g., a square which is divided into four equal parts. These lines, when combined, make shapes that are interesting or commonplace, beautiful or ugly. The ability to arrange lines in beautiful and refined relations demands the best individual thought and skill, and the possibilities of beauty of arrangement of lines are unlimited.

The children wished to design pillow-cushions, etc., for Christmas gifts, and one group of children planned to furnish the rest-room with pillows and draperies, appropriately decorated.

Successful designs were chosen and carved on wood blocks, and these blocks were used to print the design on the textiles. Blocks of white pine were used of the desired size, two or three inches square, and about two inches thick. Soft wood was used because it could be carved with sloyd knives at the desks in the classroom. There are many disadvantages in using soft wood, great care being necessary not to split the wood. Hard wood is much to be preferred if tools and the shop bench are available. A large, well-padded board is necessary to stretch the cloth over before printing, and another smaller pad, covered with felt or cheesecloth, for the color. The color must be thoroughly mixed with turpentine. Oil paints are most satisfactory and convenient to use, and wash well in tepid water and soap if handled carefully. Dyes can be used, but must be mixed with a paste (any starch or library paste will answer this purpose). When two or more colors are to be used, as many blocks must be carved as there are colors; or, if one block is used, the colors must be painted on the parts of the design with a brush, before each print is made. (See Figs. 12 and 13.)

METAL-WORK

GRACE K. DEWEY

Metal-work has been attempted at this school, up to the present time, only in grades above the fifth. Even in the sixth a comparatively small amount has been done.

There is perhaps a fair question as to whether work of this kind cannot be done by still younger children, but it has been the general experience of the school that work of the character described here—the shaping of small bowls and trays, and the decoration by raising and etching—may be begun more successfully in the seventh grade than with younger children.

The description which follows tells, somewhat in detail, of the methods employed in making a few articles which are fairly typical of many of the things made.

To avoid the danger of discouragement at the outset of the work, beginners are usually permitted to make only the most

simple articles, such as ash-trays, pin-trays, and plates of various sizes and shapes. (See Fig. 14.)

The metal most used has been copper, though a few pieces have been made of brass, and a few of a combination of both.

In planning an article, its construction is carefully considered; also the best materials for it, its proportions, the design for its decoration, and the tools which will be required in its making.

Working-drawings are then made, including the decorative design, special attention being given in the latter to proportions and space relations.

In every case where it has been practicable, especially with the younger children, wooden blocks and wooden hammers have been used in preference to the metal tools. This has been done because with the wooden tools the children are less likely to make ruinous dents in their work; because the metal hardens less quickly in the working, and so needs annealing less often; and because the pupils themselves can make much of their own apparatus.

The oblong trays (see Fig. 14) were shaped by hammering with a wooden mallet from the outside over a wooden block having a curved edge corresponding to the curve at which the piece was to be turned up.

The plates were fashioned by hammering from the face side on a wooden L-shaped block with metal hammers. Wooden mallets were used to flatten the flange and bottom of the plates.

The metal becomes hard after being beaten for a time, and must be annealed by heating to a bright red and cooling suddenly in water, after which it is as soft as at first.

The trays and plates are usually decorated, either on the flange or in the bottom.

If the design is to be etched, in the bottom of the tray, for example, it is first carefully drawn in pencil, then the raised portion of the design is painted with asphaltum paint. This must be most carefully done, as the paint is apt to spread over the line of design, and when etched leaves a ragged edge instead of a good, clear line. When the paint is dry, diluted nitric acid is used to eat away the background. When the acid has eaten deep enough,

the paint can be removed with turpentine, and the metal cleaned and polished with powdered pumice stone and oil, and afterward with powdered rouge. The tray can then be colored either by acids or heat, or it may be left to oxidize naturally.

If the pattern is to be embossed on the tray, a pitch block is used. This is made by melting together equal parts, by weight, of black pitch and plaster of Paris with a small lump of mutton tallow, the mixture being poured into a wooden bowl while liquid. The tray is placed on the pitch block while it is hot, but the pitch must be allowed to cool before work is begun.

One of the simplest forms of embossing is done by using nails or blanks, each one filed to fit a unit of the design. These forms would necessarily be limited to such simple figures as rectangles of varying proportions, ellipses, circles, etc. The tool is used like a die, being held in the proper place in the design and struck so as to make but a single impression of itself. Many attractive and original patterns can be made in this way, and it has the added advantage of being within the power of the sixth- and seventh-grade pupils, while the embossing done with tracers and punches requires greater control and care than children of these grades are apt to possess.

A number of pieces, such as match-safes, ink-stands, lamps (both base and shade), candlesticks, and shades, have been made by riveting the parts together. This is usual where the article is bounded by plane faces or is of cylindrical or conical form. The candlestick (see Fig. 14) is composed of three pieces. The round dish has the edge turned up to half an inch in height. This was done on a wooden block with an oval-faced metal hammer, from the inside of the dish.

The candle-holder was cut out of a single piece of copper of somewhat lighter weight than the dish, and when flat was shaped like a cross. After filing, it was riveted to the center of the dish, and then the four arms of which it was composed were bent into position. The handle was next cut out, shaped and filed, then riveted onto the bottom and rim of the dish.

Some of the older pupils have made watch-fobs and belt-clasps (see Figs. 15-17). Fig. 15 shows a sketch of one of the



FIG. 1

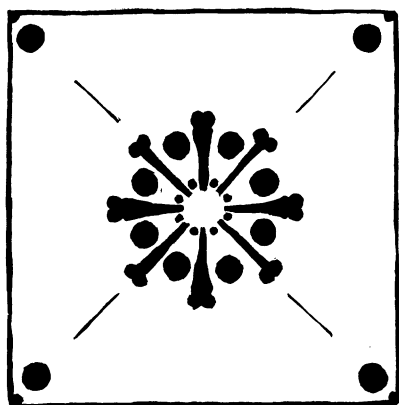


FIG. 2

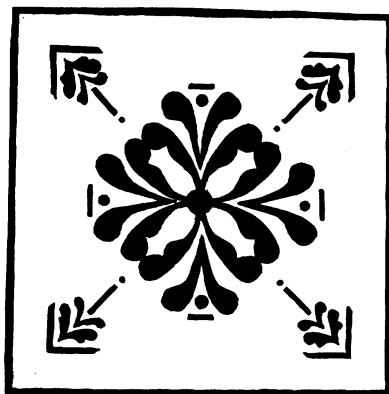


FIG. 3

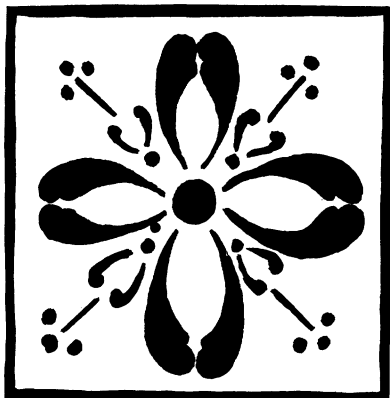


FIG. 4

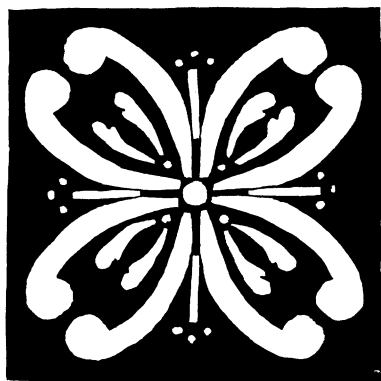


FIG. 5

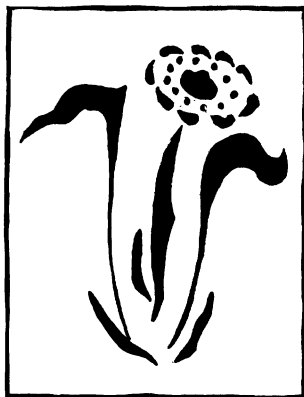


FIG. 6

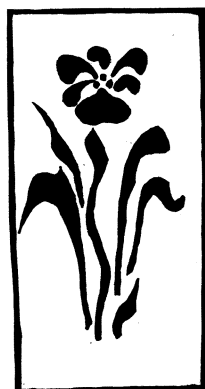


FIG. 7

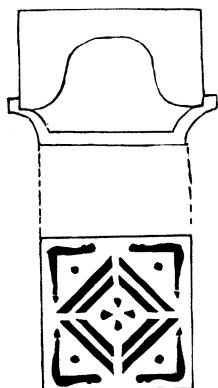


FIG. 8

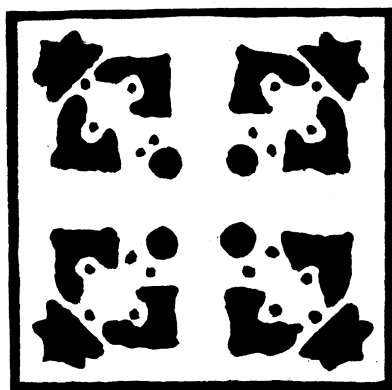


FIG. 9

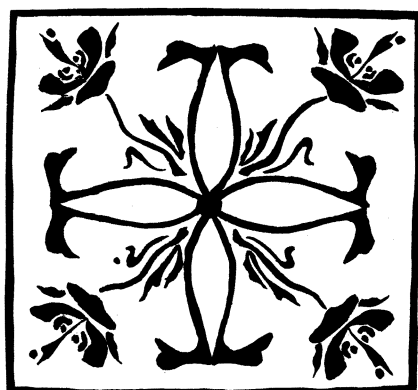


FIG. 10.—Wild Carrot Unit

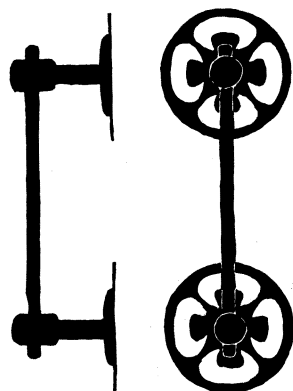


FIG. 11

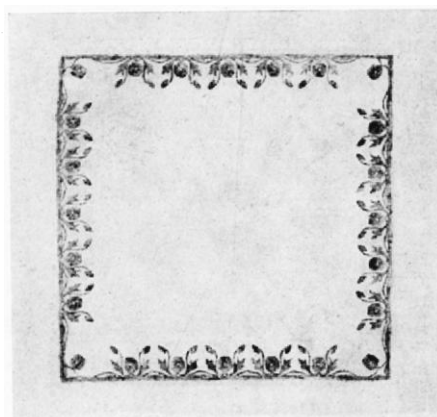


FIG. 12

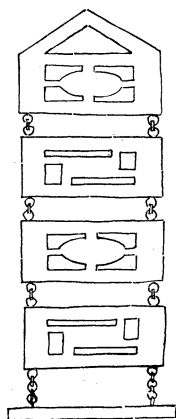


FIG. 15.—Watch Fob

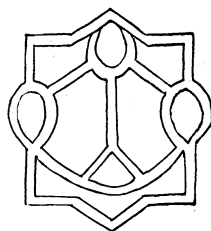


FIG. 17.—Belt Buckle



FIG. 18.—Winnowing Wheat
2d Grade



FIG. 16.—Belt Buckle

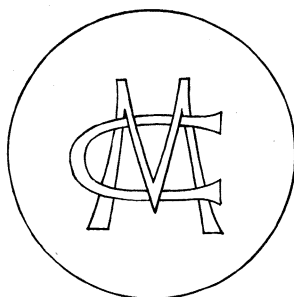


FIG. 19.—Inlaid Tile
4th Grade

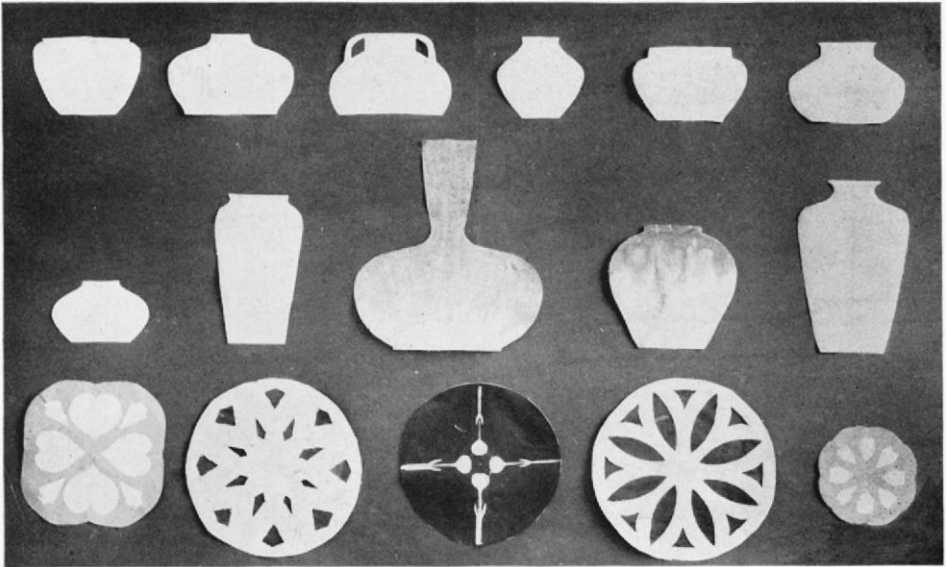


FIG. 20.—Designs for Inlaid Tiles
5th Grade

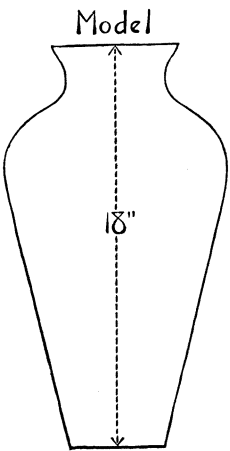


FIG. 21

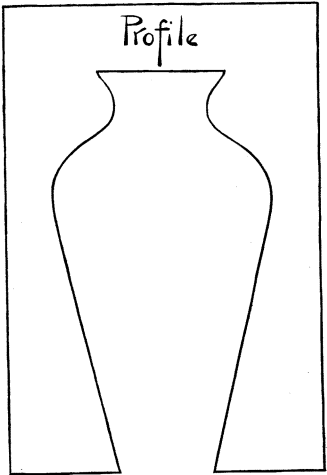


FIG. 21.—Vase

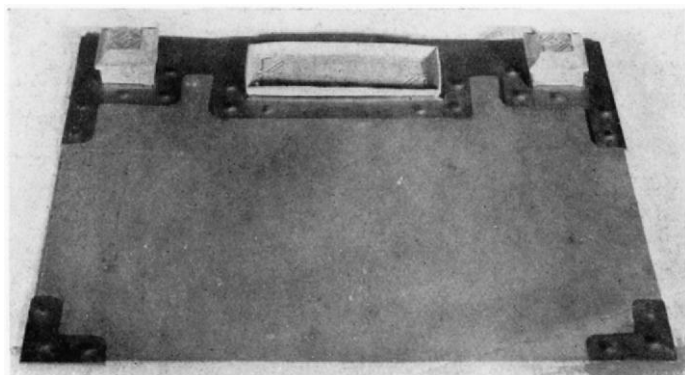


FIG. 22.—Desk Set
9th Grade



FIG. 23.—Pottery for Christmas Gifts
3d to 11th Grade

fobs. This was composed of four pieces linked together. These pieces were one and three-eighths inches long, and five-eighths of an inch wide. The squares and oblongs were cut through with a fine jeweler's saw, after which the edges were filed smooth. The little rings to link the pieces together were then soldered on.

An enameled belt-buckle (see Fig. 16) was made in this manner. A piece of copper, larger than the buckle was to be, was put on the pitch block, which had been heated by the blow-pipe. The design was then transferred to the copper. A piece of steel blank was filed into a tracing-tool, and with this and a chaser's hammer the outline of the design was traced. Other tools were then made and used to push down the background. The copper was then taken from the block, annealed, and cleaned. The pitch was again heated, and this time the copper was put on face down, so that the part to be raised could be pushed up with rounded tools.

This process was repeated several times, first working from the face and then the back, until the design was as perfect as the pupil could make it.

Each time the buckle was taken from the pitch block the copper was annealed and cleaned before again putting it on the block. After the buckle was sawed out and filed, the back was put on. The completed front piece was clamped to a clean piece of flat copper. A wash of borax was painted around the joint as a flux, and little pieces of silver solder put near together around the joint. The blow-pipe was turned on, gently at first, from underneath, then on top with good force, until the solder flowed into the joint.

The enamels selected were green and blue. They were first ground separately in small mortars. When fine as sand, they were washed with clear water to take away dust or other impurities. The enamels were then put into the depressions of the design, and when they were dry the buckle was placed so that the heat from the blow-pipe would come underneath it. After the enamel was fused, the buckle was allowed to cool gradually.

When the enameling was finished, the back piece was sawed close to the joint, and filed until smooth and round. Then the

buckle was cleaned and polished, and the clasp and loop were soldered to the back with soft solder.

CLAY-MODELING

HELEN PUTNAM

The following statements written by the children, tell something of what is being done in clay-work in the school. It is customary for the various classes to report from time to time to the whole school at the morning exercises about their work, and the accounts are reproduced here as nearly as possible as they were given at such times.

We were studying about threshing grain, so we thought that it would be nice if we should make models of clay for the second grade next year. The first thing I did was to make a tile of clay. Then I had to draw men pitching up wheat with forks to winnow it. When the men toss the grain up the wheat falls down; but the chaff blows away. After I got through drawing, I built on some more clay where my drawing was, to make the men stand out. I made the arm of the man highest because it was nearest to me, and the other parts that were further away I made lower. After we get through modeling, our tiles will be baked in the kiln, but not glazed. (See Fig. 18.)

A. H., Second Grade.

This is how I made my inlaid tile. First I made the tile. Then I drew the letters on it, and as soon as I got them to my liking I dug them out $\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch deep.

Then I ground, sifted, and weighed the colors I wished to inlay. These colors were red and blue. For the red I used 10 grams of red under-glaze color and 20 grams of common clay. For the blue I mixed 7 grams of blue under-glaze color, 2 grams of green under-glaze color, and 35 grams of common clay. I ground them in a mortar, with water, and poured them out on a plaster tile to dry till they were no longer sticky.

Then I put them in the spaces I had dug out, using the red for the M and the blue for the C. When the letters were all filled in, I let the tile get almost dry, and then scraped it with a knife to make it even all over. Then it was ready for firing. (See Fig. 19.)

W. B. B., Fourth Grade.

Last year in the fourth and fifth grades we made our designs for pottery work by folding and cutting papers. The fourth grade made designs for jars or bowls, and they were limited to 5 inches in diameter and 3 inches in height. The upper row of patterns (Fig. 20) shows their work. Of course, they did not have as much variety as the fifth grade, who were allowed almost any

size they wanted, but it was very surprising to see how many shapes they could get within those dimensions.

The fifth grade took pieces of manila paper and folded them in half; then they cut one side of the shape wanted. When they opened the paper, they had both sides symmetrical. A good many of us wanted drip glaze, and we had several different ways of representing it in our patterns. One way was to cut a piece of paper the shape of the drips, painting it the color we wished. Another way was to saturate the jar pattern with water, then paint it over the top with the drip color, letting this run down. This made a more satisfactory effect than the other. The second row shows these patterns.

The bottom row shows the way we made designs for inlaid tile. First we cut a piece of paper into a square or circle, according to the design we had in mind. Then we folded it into halves, then fourths, then eighths (or halves and sixths if our design called for that), with the folds always radiating from the center. Next we cut out different figures from the folded papers, and then opened them out to see the whole design. It was lots of fun, because we never knew just what was going to come out. We mounted these patterns on colored paper, the openings showing the places where the colored clay was to be. (See Fig. 20.)

D. P., Sixth Grade.

I began my desk set (see Fig. 22) by making drawings for the intended ink-well, stamp-box, and pen-tray. Then, from a few units, given me for use in the drawing class, I composed a design, and adapted it to the set. (See Fig. 8 under "Design.") Then I made the drawing of the copper corners and stand for the set. The ink-well, stamp-box, and tray are made of clay. The ink-well was modeled of a block of clay, and the well hollowed out. The stamp-box is of the same dimensions, but the sides were cut out of a slab of clay and welded on, instead of being modeled on.

The covers of the ink-well and the stamp-box are uniform, and are made with a rim at the edge, so as to fit onto the box and well.

The design on the sides of the ink-well, stamp-box, and tray was indented with a small tool. The design on the covers and the bottom of the tray was dug out.

The copper stand and corners were cut out according to design, and openings were left in which to place the various parts of the set.

The design on the copper consisted merely of dots in relief, made by hammering from the under side. Then the rough edges were filed off and the stains rubbed off with diluted sulphuric acid.

The blotting-pad is made of heavy tar-board, upon which I laid the blotter. Over these I slipped the metal parts, and then set the pottery pieces in place. (See Fig. 22.)

T. M., Ninth Grade.

Fig. 23 shows pottery made for Christmas presents by children from third to eleventh grades.